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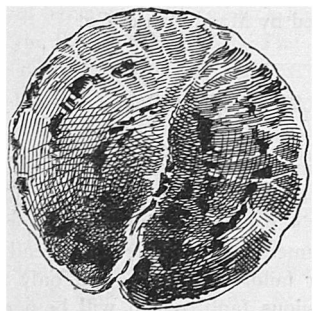
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CERAMICS

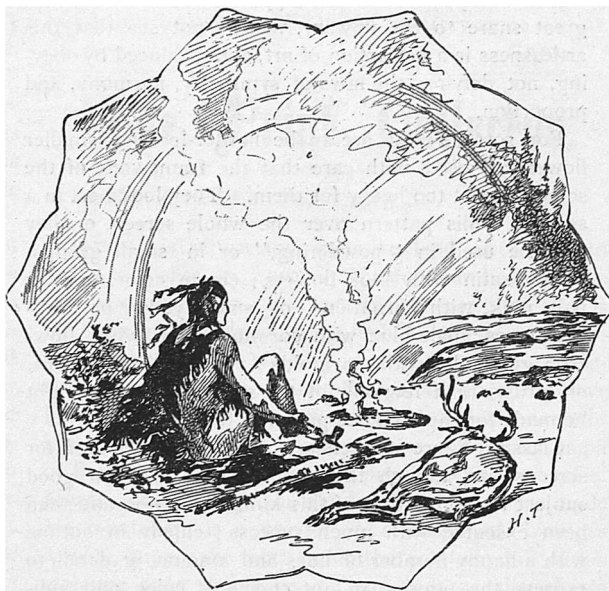
THE WHITE HOUSE PORCELAIN SERVICE.



BUTTER-PLATE.

LONG before the Christian era the emperors of China and Japan were proud to be known as patrons of the ceramic art, and from the rediscovery in Europe of the secret of porcelain manufacture, nearly two centuries ago, by Böttger, whose royal protector showed his appreciation of his services by keeping him a close prisoner, the encouragement of the art has been the pride of Western kings and princes. Sèvres, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, Derby, and Worcester have produced special porcelain services of more or less beauty, for the use of royalty in their respective countries. Some of these famous factories have long since ceased to pay their expenses, but government support has been continued to them, albeit somewhat grudgingly, in remembrance of what they once did toward the promotion of a great national art indus-

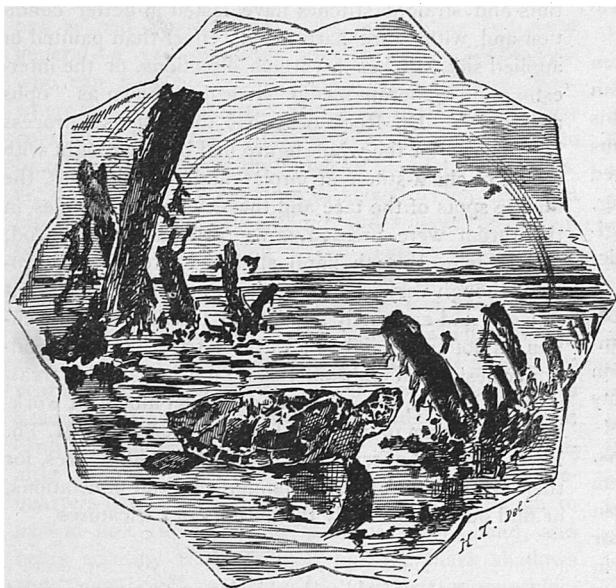
a national character to the service for the White House, and the President's wife, who is a lady of taste, has shown much interest in the adoption of the idea.



SOUP-PLATE. "AMERICAN SOUP OF THE XVTH CENTURY."

the descriptive pamphlet published by Haviland & Co., he has "fished in the rivers of the East and West and in the sea, hunted fowl and wild game in the forests, the swamps, and the mountains; shot the buffalo on the plains, and visited the historic haunts of the Indians in the East; met the Indians in their wigwams and studied their habits on the prairies of the Far West." Judging from the designs of the service before us, Mr. Davis's adventurous experiences have stood him in good stead, for they furnish the motives for a wide range of subjects.

It may be well to say here a few words as to the plan of the decoration. This does not conform to the rigid notions of æsthetic propriety which demand, for instance, great simplicity of treatment in the decoration of a vessel which is to be in part hidden when in use and forbids the introduction of any ornament which is not in all positions as fully right way upward to the beholder as it can be. Under this iron rule, no plate, of course, should have a landscape painted upon it, nor a figure, nor even a group of flowers or fruit. We need hardly tell our readers who are familiar with the plate designs drawn for our pages that we have no sympathy with such an extreme view. In the case of a plate, it is certainly a good general rule that little or no ornament should be placed in the centre unless it be

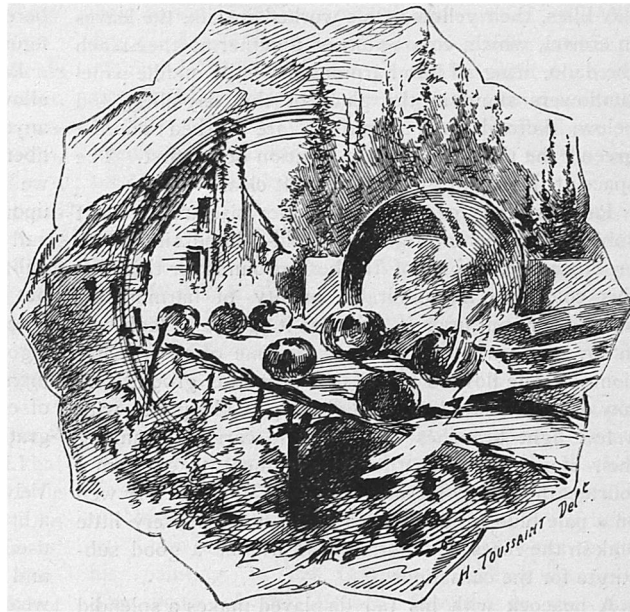


SOUP-PLATE. "GREEN TURTLE."

try. In our own beloved republic ceramic art is an exotic. To expect any government aid toward its development would be, of course, entirely out of the question. We are too practical a people to trouble ourselves much about art of any kind. There is no money in it—at least that is the view which our legislators would probably take of the subject if they should ever trouble themselves to consider it.

As to the dinner service in use at the White House, what was good enough for George Washington would doubtless be deemed good enough for his successors for all time to come. But as the servants there for a century past have with great regularity done their share of breakage of the government crockery, very little of the original china-ware remains. Each incoming administration has made such additions to the stock as fancy dictated or immediate necessity demanded, the result being a charmingly incongruous accumulation of queer ceramic odds and ends. At last, however, it having been decided by Mrs. Hayes that a new dinner service, for state occasions at least, was positively needed, the order was given in the spring of 1879 to Messrs. Haviland & Co., the famous Franco-American house, whose display of porcelain and faïence at our Centennial Exhibition, and later at the Paris Exposition, won for it the highest honors. For the first time it was now proposed to give something of

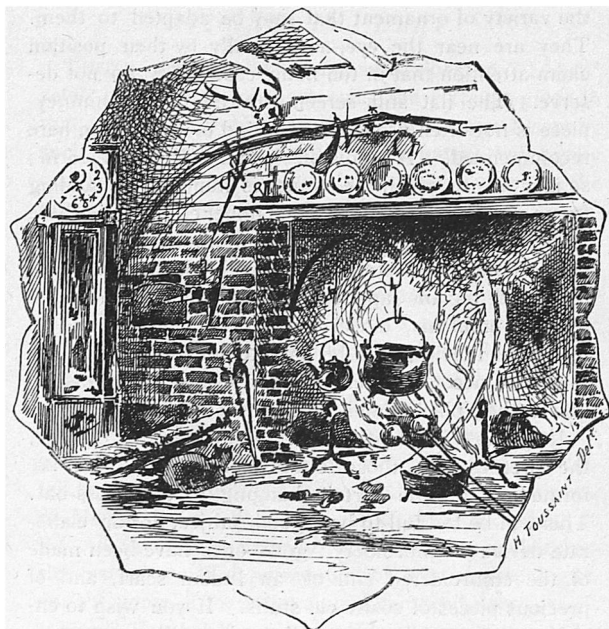
In the short period specified for the completion of the service it would have been impossible to make the ware in this country—as some one has suggested should have been done—even if the native kaolin was of the quality and could have been found readily in the quantity required. As to the decorating, perhaps this country might have furnished the artists if the time allowed to discover them had been sufficiently extended; but, with a full knowledge of what is being done in ceramic decoration in the United States, we are forced to say that, while we have some excellent china painters, it must be some years before an American manufacturer can hope to control the services of such an accomplished staff of decorators as have contributed to the production of this beautiful Haviland set. To produce an American service, however, it was necessary, as it was eminently proper, to intrust the designing to an American artist familiar with the native flora and fauna, and capable of infusing into the work something of the



SOUP-PLATE. "TOMATO."

a central decoration specially designed as such, and then it should be a small, regular, radiating figure. When natural flowers or fruits are introduced pictorially into a plate, they are best only as a side decoration, and even then we think that they should be confined to a dessert service. When the business of the dinner is over the rules of decoration which indicate the inappropriateness of covering an inverted bison with mashed potatoes, or looking at an Indian through Julien soup, may well be relaxed while we are trifling "over the walnuts and the wine." We are not inclined to be so lenient in regard to the introduction of pictures on our plates during the regular courses of the meal.

In some instances, in the Haviland set, and notably in some of the fish-plates, the forms of the pieces and the decoration are ingeniously and appropriately combined; for as the lower and greater division of the plate is constructed to hold the food, the upper or decorated part, although a picture in itself, will not be likely to be put before the guest, wrong side up, by even the clumsiest servant. But as a rule no attempt has been made to conform to this consideration. As the service is intended only for state occasions, and when not in use it will probably be exhibited in richly-lined cases on a side-board or chiffonier, this is not perhaps a very serious matter after all. We believe, however, that for a



SOUP-PLATE. "1776."

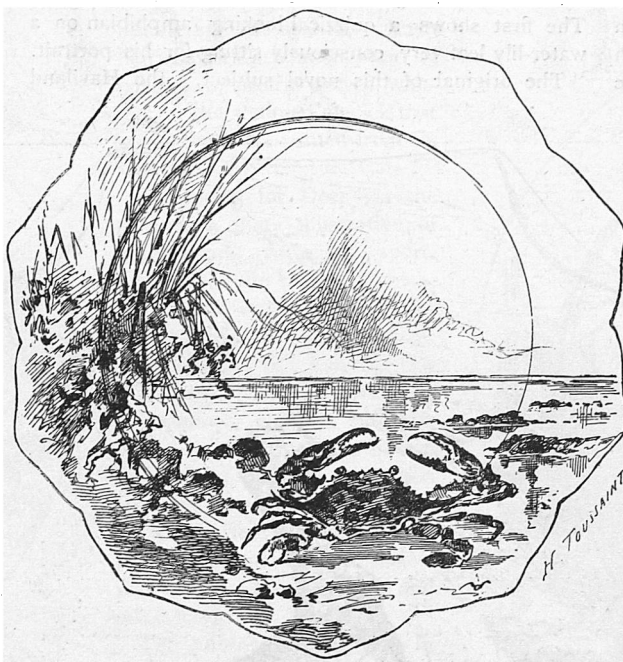
national spirit. Such a man, fortunately, was found in Mr. Theodore R. Davis, of New York. To quote from

table service *for ordinary use* no attempt to follow the precedent under consideration should be encouraged, no matter how good the work of the decorator may be. As it is, we must look at the new White House service chiefly as a collection of ceramic pictures, and we can hardly doubt that they were so designed by Mr. Davis. Regarded as such, we find in them much to admire. As illustrations of our flora and fauna they are thoroughly American; as compositions they are interesting; they are generally decorative, and they are invariably instructive, apparently no pains having been spared to make them technically accurate.

In the pamphlet referred to (from which we may quote hereafter, without special mention of the fact) Messrs. Haviland & Co. say:

"In presenting the service to the public, we desire to make some statements which seem to be important to enable a just criticism of it. The designs were made in water-color, and although in nearly every instance they were bold and striking, they were difficult to reproduce perfectly upon porcelain, with hard mineral color. And to successfully accomplish this, it was necessary to invent new methods, and to have recourse to peculiar mechanical appliances. We coincided with the artist in the opinion that a high degree of finish should not be attempted in every plate, fearing the sacrifice of breadth and tone, which he deemed necessary to the general effect of the series, when arranged upon the table. This was undoubtedly correct, for some of the plates, when examined singly, lose a part

the decoration. It must not be inferred that we believe that coarse, inartistic drawing and design could ever



SOUP-PLATE. "THE BLUE CRAB."

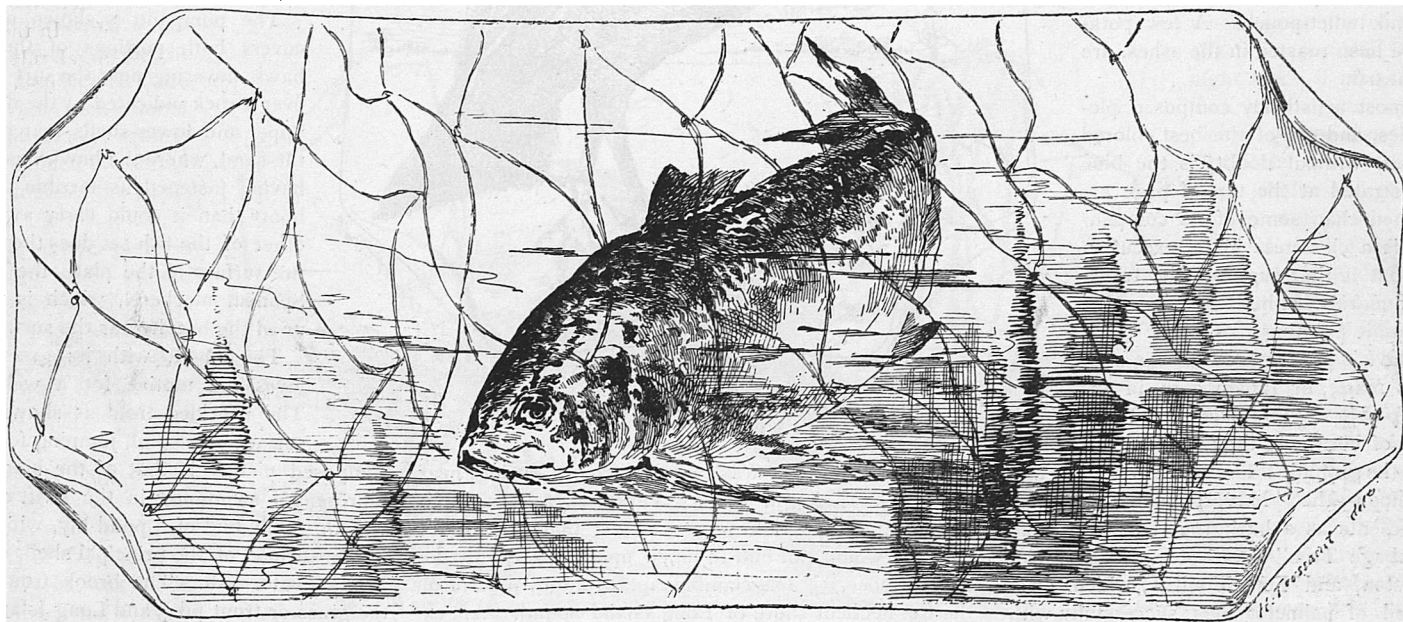
compete with refined work, but we do insist that a plate, when decorated with a strong, firm drawing, closely studied from nature, which tells clearly the story of the

The twelve illustrations for the dessert set are the "Chincapin Nut," "Pecan Nut," "Papaw," "Locust," "Mocking Bird," "Maple Sugar," "Concord Grape," "Huckleberry," "Persimmon," "Ohio Golden Rod," "Baltimore Oriole and Virginia Creeper," and Mr. Davis's "Studio."

The oyster-plate, which is not so large as the one ordinarily used for this course, is cleverly designed to represent five natural Blue Point oyster shells carelessly grouped. Beyond there is portrayed a cluster of the raccoon oysters, a species well known in the Southern Atlantic States. Sprays of sea-weed cluster about them, and serve for decoration about the Blue Point shells. The background affords a glimpse of the ocean.

The soup-plate is of a new shape, decagonal, like the flower of the mountain laurel, after which it is modelled, and which serves for the design of the first of the set. The vessel is rather a bowl than a plate, the contour conforming to the natural base and edges of the laurel flower. The outside surface is delicately enriched with gold. The rays which compose the base are decorated with light green.

Our illustrations give five of the plates. The first represents an Indian reclining upon a ledge of rocks, his calumet convenient to his hand, and his bow-case, made from the skin of a spotted fawn, is thrown carelessly beside him. To the right, the deer which he has slain indicates the material of which the soup is to be composed; from the circular opening of a cavity in the rock steam arises; near the



FISH-PLATTER. "THE SHAD."

of their attractiveness, but the same plates, when placed upon the table, will not seem inferior to others which may have been separately examined to more advantage.

subject, will attract more attention, and be productive of more enjoyment, than the plate which has great beauty of finish, but lacks the qualities noted above."

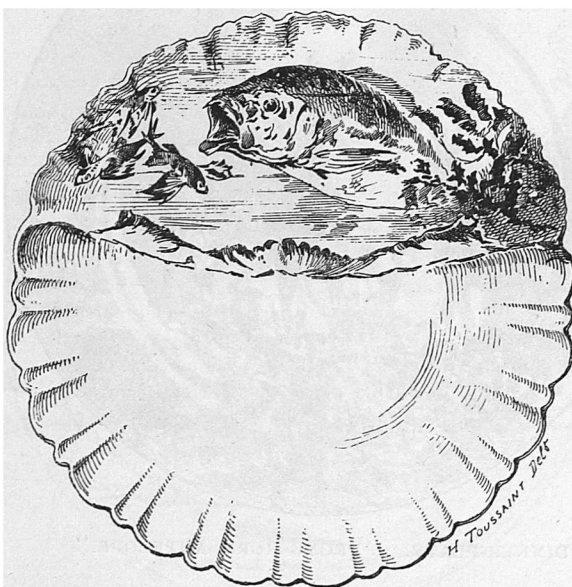
The service is for twelve persons. Each piece is differently decorated, excepting the oyster plates, individual butter plates, and coffee and tea cups, one of which in each case represents the series of twelve, and there are three large platters for the fish, meat, and game courses, respectively.

The subjects of the soup series are the "Mountain Laurel," "The Blue Crab," "American Soup of the XVth. Century," "Palmetto Cabbage," "Harvest Moon, Maize," "Tomato," "Green Turtle," "Southward Flight of Ducks," "Clam Bake," "Frog (Song of Spring)," "1776," and "Okra."

The fish series shows the "Red Snapper," "Spanish Mackerel," "Smelt," "Terrapin," "Speckled Trout," "Black Bass," "Striped Bass," "Fresh-water Lobster," "Pompano," "Brook Pike (Trout Pike)," "Blue Fish," and "Sheep's Head."

The subjects of the meat series are the "Trailing Arbutus," "Bears in a Bee Tree," "Mule Deer," "Buffalo," "Coon in a Persimmon Tree," "Chickens in a Garden," "Peccaries," "Rocky Mountain Sheep," "Antelope," "Floating for Deer," "The Cranes' Walk-Round," and "On the Plains at Night."

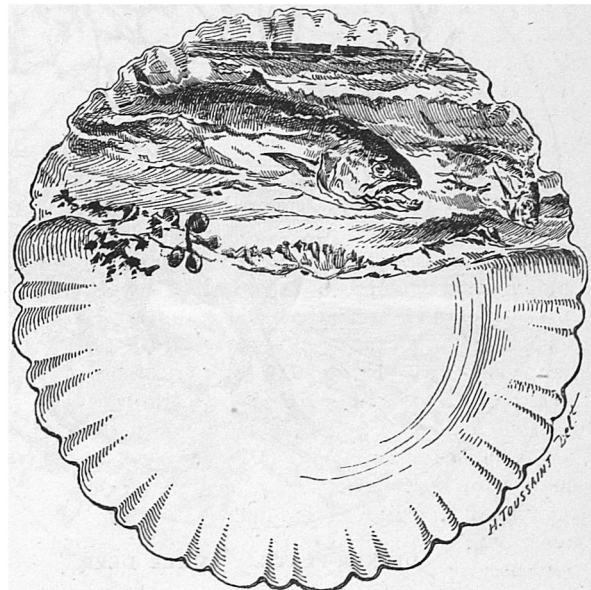
The game series shows the "Canvas-back Duck," "Rail," "The Ptarmigan's Bath," "Ruffed Grouse," "Bob White," "California Quail," "Wild Pigeon," "Teal Duck," "Yellow-Legged Snipe," "Reed Bird," "Woodcock," and "Pinnated Grouse."



FISH-PLATE. "RED SNAPPER."

Another result thus obtained is the absence of the feeling of timidity noticeable in most examples of fine porcelain, where a high degree of finish is the principal feature of

pot-hole lie blackened stones used to heat the water. Beyond the ledge is seen the edge of a fall, the mist arising from which is tinged with a delicate rainbow.



FISH-PLATE. "BLUE-FISH."

Spruce and hemlock trees form the background. The top of the design is clouded with the smoke from the fire used to heat the stones. These pot-holes are to

be seen in the ledge rocks of the coast, and in similar formations in the interior of the United States.

The green turtle shown in the picture is on a Florida reef, crawling between the ribs of an old wreck which is stranded. "The moon sheds a mellow light which tinges the waves, and the moss on the wreck and the phosphorescence of the waves give life to the drawing." The coloring of this piece is very rich and decorative, the free use of gold in the moon and reflected light contributing greatly to the beauty of the effect.

The opposite picture shows the tomato in a peculiarly American scene, representing a log-house situated in a mountain country, where the summer is too short to ripen the tomatoes on the vine, from which they are culled in season to prevent their destruction by the early frost. The picture charms by its suggestive naturalness, and is a good example of the general descriptive character of Mr. Davis's designs. A more decorative treatment would certainly have been to give the tomato in its luscious ripeness and brilliancy of color, which are too valuable to be lost. The tomato occurs again in the meat set, however, with more of these characteristics.

Another homelike picture is "1776," which is much better in color than the plate just described. It shows the hearthstone of a New England home, with its capacious fireplace and swinging crane, the Dutch oven and old-time clock. Some "willow" plates ornament the shelf, and above are suspended a flint-lock rifle, powder-horn, and bullet-pouch. A few potatoes, which have been roasted in the ashes, are seen upon the hearth.

Among the most artistically composed pictures in the series, and one of the best colored in the entire set, without doubt, is the blue crab design illustrated at the top of page 11. It is more finished than some of its companions, yet there is a cleanness in its execution and a dash about it that suggests the translucence of an aquarelle rather than the usual opacity of a ceramic painting.

One of Mr. Davis's peculiarly American subjects introduces maize, or Indian corn, in another of the soup-plates. Pumpkin-vines twine among the hills of corn, and the pumpkins are scattered about the ground. The scene is illumined by the autumnal moon—the "harvest moon." Another soup-plate represents as a background to a beautiful "Palmetto Cabbage Tree" Charleston Harbor, Fort Sumter, Charleston, and Fort Moultrie, which, originally constructed of palmetto logs, successfully withstood the British fleet in the Revolutionary war.

is quite a decorative plant, and is brought in effectively for another soup plate. The two other plates of the set are "The Frog" and "Clambake and Chowder." The first shows a quizzical looking amphibian on a water-lily leaf very consciously sitting for his portrait. "The original of this novel subject," the Haviland

vessels were mere attempts at copying in clay the forms of fruit and sea-shells which were in use as drinking or eating vessels. In China, drinking vessels are still found in the primitive form of the bottle-gourd. The form of the Haviland service plate for fish is derived from the scallop-shell, two of which are combined to form the

plate, the larger being designed for the dish, and the smaller receiving the decoration. The tone color of the principal shell varies to correspond with that of the decorated one.

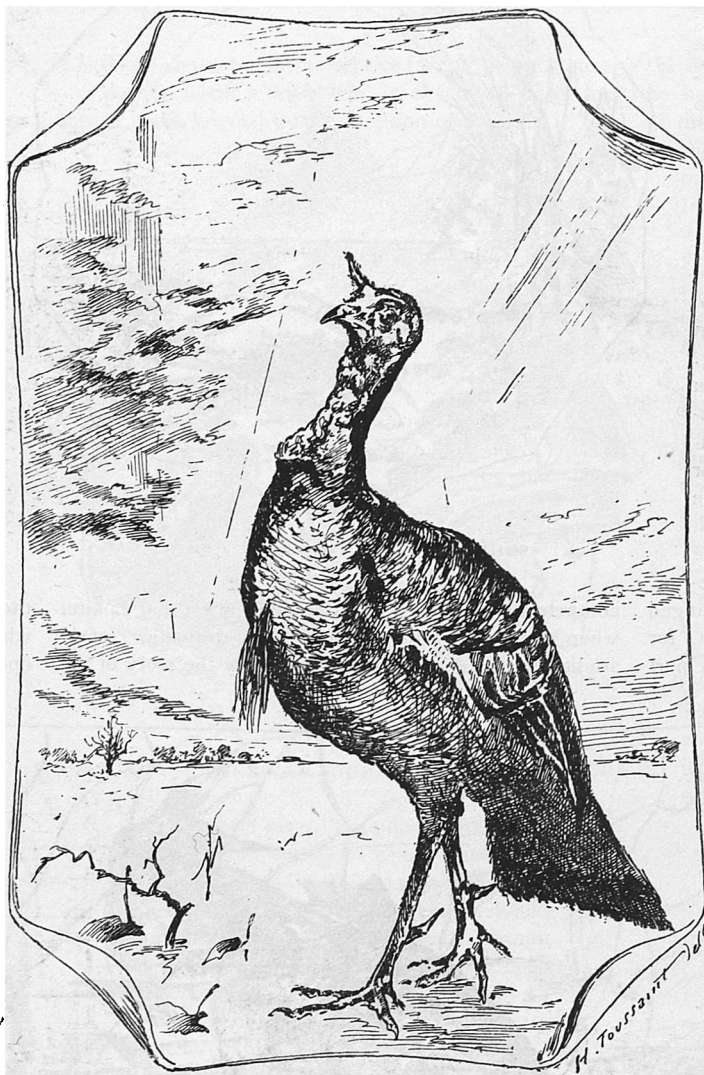
The first plate we illustrate is the red snapper, which with its brilliant crimson hue combines charmingly in color with the soft greens of the water and weeds. Opposite is the blue-fish chasing a porgy, which it has bitten and is about to eat. The plate is excellent both in the drawing, which is full of action, and the coloring. We wish that we had the space at command to illustrate more of the charming designs of this course, but must satisfy ourselves by merely describing them.

The sheep's-head, the most timid fish known—as the blue-fish is perhaps the most voracious as it certainly is one of the boldest, turning on one when captured and attempting to bite—is the subject of another interesting plate. The fish is shown in the vicinity of a barnacle-covered palmetto-log, and numerous small fish await the fragments which they may obtain when the sheep's-head crushes the shell-fish. A spray of sea-weed falls from the decorated shell to the shell beneath, lending an additional charm to a beautiful composition.

The pompano is shown in a design which covers both portions of the plate. A fish-hawk, hovering near the surf which is breaking over a rock indicated by the dividing line of the upper and lower shells, watches a pompano on the sand, where the hawk has dropped its prey, having fastened its terrible claws into heavier booty than it could carry away. In only one other of the fish set does the design fill the entire surface of the plate, the subject being the Spanish mackerel, which is represented lying upon the beach near the surf.

The smelt, with its greenish silvery hue, gives the motive for a well-colored design. The speckled trout is shown rushing to the surface of a pond, jumping for a fly. A better-

composed picture is that of the black bass, which is represented swimming in the swift current of a clear stream. The bud of a pond-lily, which falls gracefully to the surface of the principal shell, characterizes it as a fresh-water fish. The brook trout, known also as the grass or trout pike, and Long Island pickerel, forms the motive for another plate. The fresh-water lobster

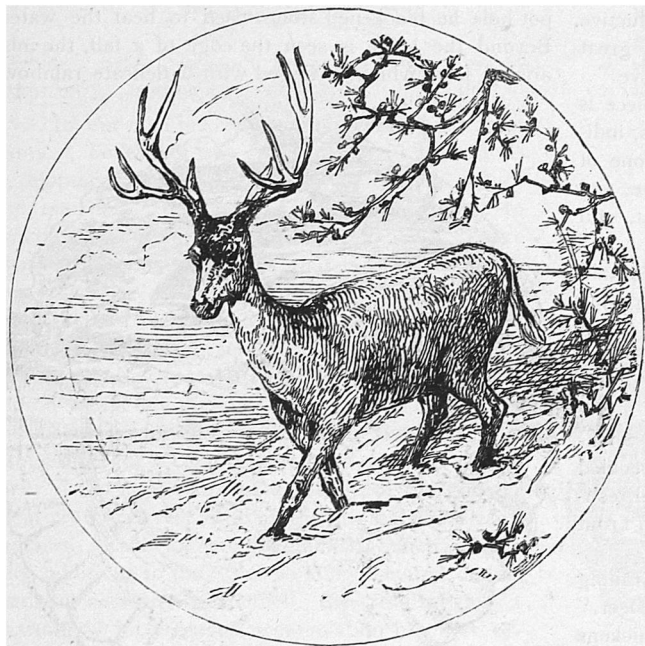


DINNER-PLATTER. "THE WILD TURKEY."

pamphlet tells us, "was captured from a spring near the Sunset Lake, in Asbury Park (where Mr. Davis had his studio), and became so tame that the artist's children would call him to lunch upon flies caught for that purpose." The clambake-plate shows a scene on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound. An excursion steamer appears in the distance. Smoke curls from the fire in the foreground, where a chowder party (who must be somewhere in the vicinity) has under way a clambake and a kettle of chowder.

We now come to the fish set, which is led off by the handsome platter shown in our illustrations. As a rule we do not like to see clay "rolled out like dough, and manipulated like so much pie-crust," as Dr. Dresser says somewhere, describing the fantastic and scalloped monstrosities produced by some English potters, and we should be inclined to object to the rolled corners of this handsome piece were it not for the clever manner in which the artist avails himself of the broad surface space thus opened to him for decoration. The picture presented here is charming in color, and in execution it is bold and original. A magnificent shad is struggling to free itself from the meshes of a net in which it has become entangled. The cords of the net are in gold, and cover the entire surface of the dish.

As to the introduction of scalloped edges into a plate out of which we are to eat, perhaps the innovation can only be justified when the scallop-shell itself forms the plate, and in such a case it becomes not only a legitimate but a desirable and natural mode of decoration. The first efforts made at the production of earthen



DINNER-PLATE. "MULE DEER."

"Southward Flight" shows a flock of canvas-back, redhead and widgeon, followed by a group of shel-drake, flying close to the surface of the ocean, and just beyond gun-shot from the beach—such a sight as is familiar enough during the month of October along the seaboard States north of the capes of the Delaware. "Okra"

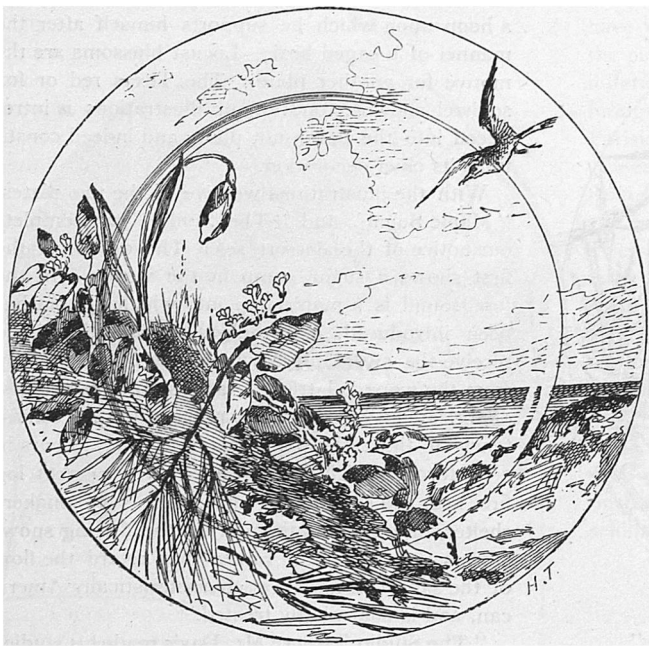


DINNER-PLATE. "PRONG-HORN ANTELOPE."

is peculiarly pugnacious, and Mr. Davis has shown two of the tribe in gladiatorial conflict. Their habit, it is explained, is nocturnal, and the tone of the design would indicate the twilight hour as the one selected for the duel. In looking at the picture, and thinking how pretty they look in their red coats in the restaurant windows, we

cannot but regret that their normal color is so undecorative. Terrapin and striped bass complete the fish set.

Coming to the dinner or meat series, we find the

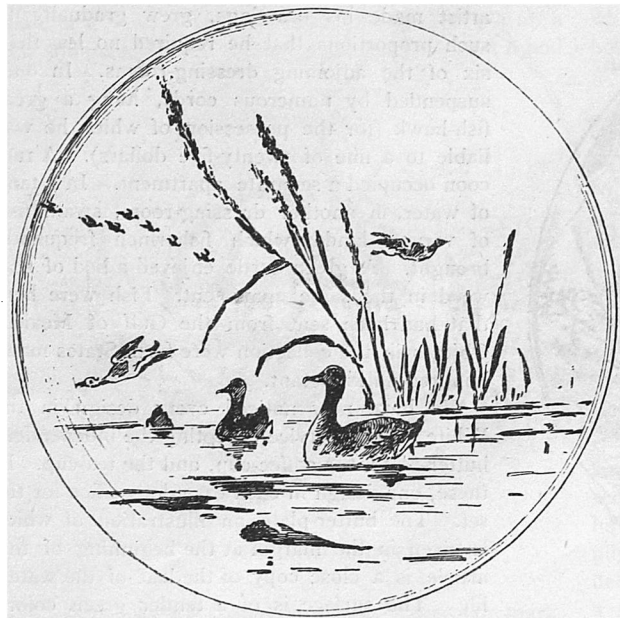


DINNER-PLATE. "TRAILING ARBUTUS."

platter dedicated to the wild turkey, the real national bird of the United States, as it is the largest and in plumage the most gorgeous of American game birds. The specimen here presented is superb. He struts through the bright snow, upon which are seen delicate reflections from his rich-colored plumage; and a sunset sky, against which are sharply defined the forms of distant trees, composes the background.

The form of the dinner-plate is peculiar, having been made, we are told, expressly for this series. It is called "coupe," a term unfamiliar to the public, but probably known to the trade. Anyway, the form is good, and adapted for decorative purposes.

First in our illustrations is the mule deer, so named by reason of the shape of its head and length of its ears. The study of the animal in the design, we are told, was made from sketches in the artist's note-book, and from the head of a noble buck killed and set up by Mrs. Maxwell, the famous lady hunter and taxidermist of Colorado. The drawing represents the deer descending a snow-covered slope of the Rocky Mountains at sunrise.



GAME PLATE. "TEAL DUCK."

The picture opposite shows the antelope, or pronghorn. It somewhat resembles the chamois of the Alps, but it has peculiarities which mark it as a distinct spe-

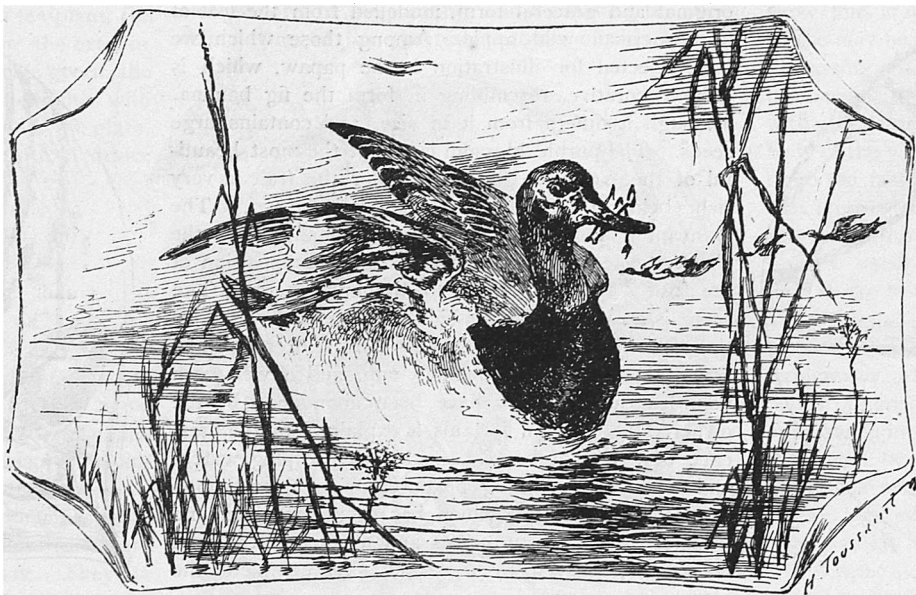
cies. The hair, during the winter, seems to be rather a vegetable fibre that stands out almost like quills. These antelopes are found in herds numbering thousands. Each herd has its attendant band of coyotes, or prairie wolves, waiting for the maimed or sick that may become separated from its fellows.

"Floating for Deer" is the title of a plate illustrative of a peculiarly American sport. The deer is the Virginia, which, next to the buffalo, is the most valuable game on the continent. The mode of hunting by "floating" is practised during the summer months, when he is in his red coat, that is so thin as to afford but little protection from the swarms of black flies and mosquitoes; to escape these the deer resorts to the lakes, which abound in lily-pads and other food.

The hunters, usually two in number, occupy a light boat, in the bow of which is placed a short staff, surmounted by a semicircle of hemlock bark, ar-

ranged to reflect the light of two candles

placed therein. This contrivance is known as a "jack;" by means of it a considerable space directly



GAME-PLATTER. "ON CHESAPEAKE BAY."

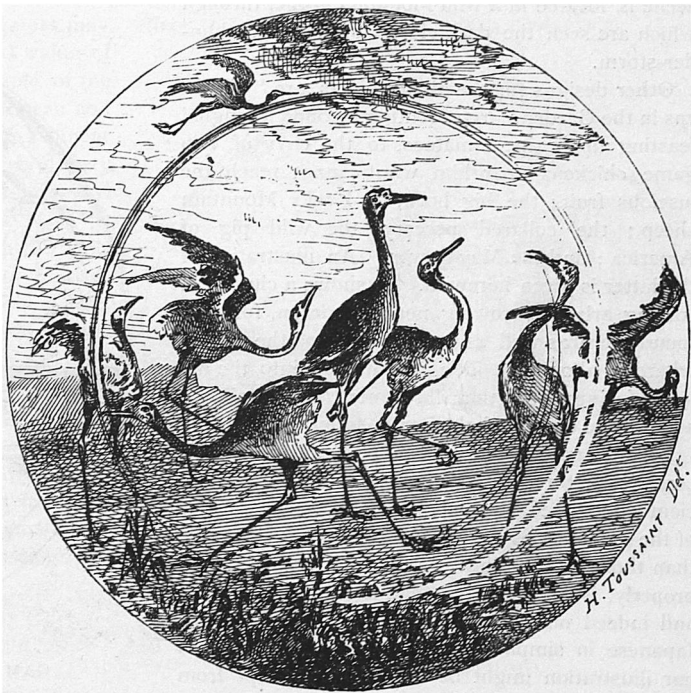
in front of the boat is illuminated, and the occupants of the boat are rendered invisible. The hunter in the stern paddles noiselessly toward the sound of splashing water, caused by the deer, which stands with head erect, knee-deep among the lily-pads or leaves, gazing intently at the fast-approaching light, the reflection of which sparkles upon the water and tinges the floating leaves with gold. The hunter, seated in the bow, with his rifle in readiness, is frequently brought within twenty or thirty yards of the deer.

One of the most amusing of the dinner-plates is that of our illustration showing "The Cranes' Walk-Round." The design represents a flock of sand-hill cranes, familiar to the people of the Western States, dancing and performing their usual antics at sunset. General Custer has told how he has lain prone on the buffalo grass and watched their strange dance. It is a "walk-round." An old patriarch stands in the centre, and the flock walk around in a circle, flapping their wings and performing the strangest gyrations.

A very striking picture is the plate entitled "On the Plains at Night." The design, we are told, is from a sketch made

by the artist while with General Custer. A good idea of its sentiment may be gathered from the following extract from the artist's note-book: "The buffalo are

heading away from the fire and are making for the river for safety. The buttes are on the other side, and



DINNER-PLATE. "CRANES' WALK-ROUND."

the river itself glows with reflected light, the moon struggling through the clouds of smoke, giving to the whole scene one of the most weird effects imaginable. The wolves that night were, if possible, more noisy than ever. The coyotes were our picket guard about the bivouac." The plate, which is a rich color harmony in blue and gold, represents a solitary wolf howling at the moon, which sheds a flood of light over a dreary waste of land and water.

The buffalo is the subject of another plate. An old bull, with blood-shot eyes, stands knee-deep in snow, which is still falling, in the last moments of defence against a herd of howling coyotes and gray wolves, who surround him and will harass him until he falls from exhaustion.

A raccoon hunt is suggested by a 'coon in a persimmon-tree, on the edge of a cornfield. A darkey in the foreground holds a blazing pine-knot torch, the glow of which and the bright eyes of the 'coon contrast strongly with the shadows of

the night.

The plate called "A Bear in a Bee Tree" shows Bruin, who has disturbed a hive of wild bees, protecting



GAME-PLATE. "THE CANVAS-BACK DUCK."

his face with one paw, while he hangs by the other from a friendly branch. It is said that the bear has the sense of the ridiculous, and the artist illustrates the notion

by portraying another bear that watches his companion's discomfiture from the mossy bank of the opposite side of a brook, and is apparently laughing at him. The scene is located in a wild mountain gorge, through which are seen the dark clouds of a distant thunder-storm.

Other designs for the dinner-plates are "Chickens in the Garden," representing a young Shanghai feasting upon ripe tomatoes, to the envy of two game chickens near him who cannot reach the luscious fruit; the big horn, or Rocky Mountain sheep; the collared peccary, the wild pig of America; and the May-flower. An illustration of the latter is given herewith. It shows a cluster of trailing arbutus growing near the ocean, for it is found there as well as on the edge of the woods where it abounds. The introduction into the design of a spray of the wild American lady-slipper adds to the charm of the composition.

In the game-platter we have an admirable ceramic picture, the character of which is sufficiently indicated by our illustration. The plates of the game series are of plaque form, and smaller than those of the dinner set. The treatment, very properly, is less massive than is that of the latter, and indeed one or two of the pieces are almost Japanese in simplicity. The teal duck shown in our illustration might be a literal transcript from a Japanese design, so graceful and chaste is the composition. The aerial perspective is excellent, and there is a delightful sense of movement about the objects in the picture. The ducks seem to swing through the air toward the foreground, where a little

the Indian pipe, a marsh plant, graceful in form, and in color a delicate shade of pink. Two rice or reed birds on a branch of apple blossoms form the decora-



GAME-PLATE. "YELLOW-LEGGED SNIPE."

tion of another plate, and the set is completed with the rail, wild pigeon, prairie-hen, cedar-bird, and the yellow-legged snipe. The latter, showing the bird in full flight along the sea-shore, is one of our illustrations.

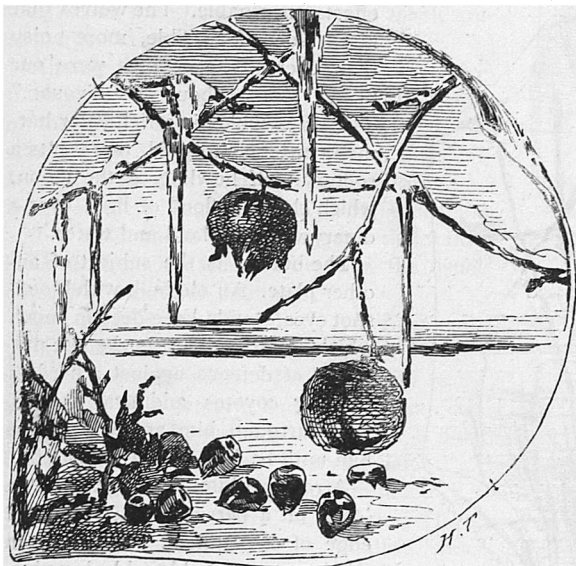
The fruit plates of the Haviland service are of an original and graceful form, modelled from the leaf of the American wild apple. Among those which we have selected for illustration is the papaw, which is quite decorative, resembling in form the fig banana, although it differs from it in size, and contains large seeds. The purple blossom is one of the most beautiful of the American flora. In color the fruit is very rich, being a soft yellow tinged with brown. The chincapin, illustrated opposite, is a small nut of the chestnut species. The most amusing composition of the fruit series is devoted to the huckleberry. The scene is a rough mountain-side; there is an overturned tin pail, from which the berries are scattered. The cover of the pail, the picking cup, and a well-worn palm-leaf hat seem to have been abandoned by the owner. The reason for this is explained by the presence of a trio of bears—an old one, keeping watch, and two cubs, or young bears, enjoying a feast upon berries, the picking of which has occasioned them no trouble. Huckleberry bushes and a stalk of the wild blackberry, relieved by a sunset sky, complete the picture.

Among other designs for dessert-plates we have the Concord grape. A green-coated katydid has ensconced himself upon the stem of a bunch of the purple fruit, and thereby produced a pretty effect of color. The mocking-bird, warbling on the gnarled limb of a

effective were it not overweighted with the swallow above it, which has been introduced, we are told, "as indicative of home." The Baltimore oriole, with its beautiful plumage, is used in another plate in combination with the Virginia creeper, which serves as a hoop upon which he supports himself after the manner of a caged bird. Locust blossoms are the motive for another plate. The Texas red or fox squirrel shown in one of our illustrations is introduced into the pecan-nut plate, and indeed constitutes its chief decoration.

With the illustrations we give of the two plates, "Maple Sugar" and "The Studio," we complete our notice of the dessert set. The design of the first shows a sugar camp in the woods. In the foreground is a maple-tree into which a spout has been introduced, and the sap trough that is to receive the sweet juice, which flows drop by drop from the wounded tree. As most of our readers, doubtless, know, the sap is reduced to the consistency of thick syrup by boiling it several hours in a cauldron, which is suspended over a great log fire, near the shanty that affords the sugar-makers shelter, and protects them from the driving snow-storms that accelerate rather than retard the flow of the sap. The scene is characteristically American, and is charmingly treated.

"The Studio," where Mr. Davis made his studies for the White House service, was unique, and the public will thank him for having used it as the motive for the decoration of one of the fruit-plates. It was located on the sea-beach at Asbury Park, a quiet resort six miles below Long Branch, New Jersey. In this



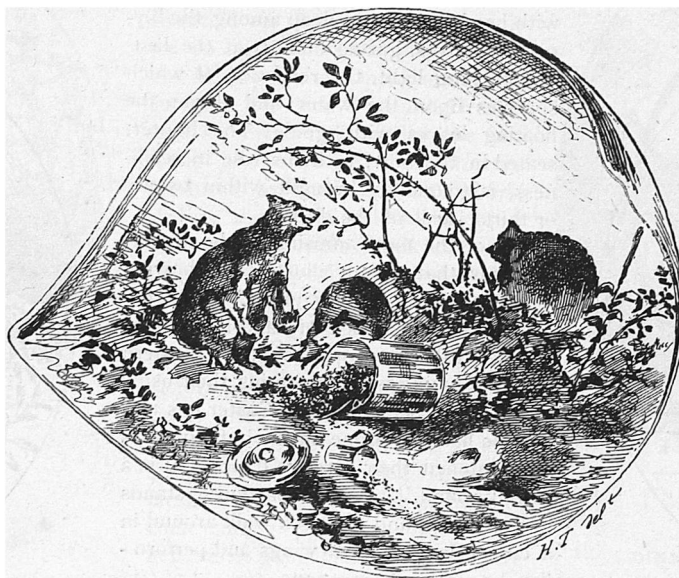
FRUIT-PLATE. "CHINCAPIN NUT."

teal drake is watching the approaching flights, evidently disturbed by the intrusion. A teal duck swims near the drake, and a few stalks of sedge-grass complete the design.

The canvas-back duck ought to be a good subject for a game-plate design, especially with the opportunity it affords of introducing the celery plant, which is of the acanthus family, and very decorative. Mr. Davis has treated it well, but in another way, bringing in the cranberry, which is certainly very useful as a point of color.

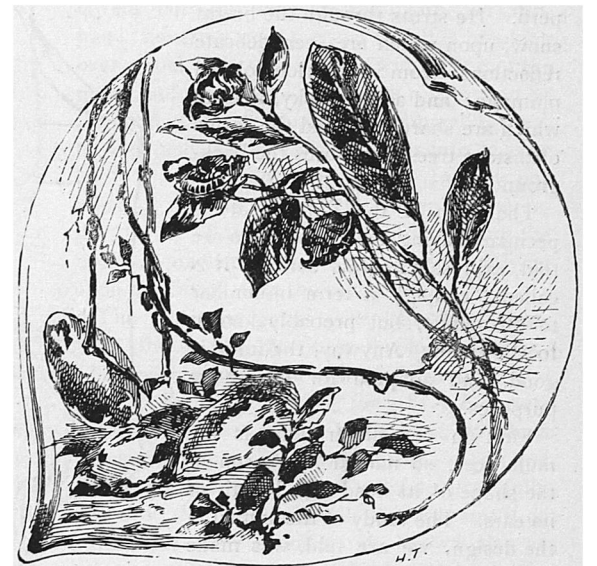
An effective use of the white of the china in decoration is shown in the plate devoted to the quail or bob-white, as it is sometimes called on account of its peculiar call. The design illustrates a cock and a hen comfortably sheltered in a depression that has been formed in the snow beneath a pine bough. The wind which produced this retreat has scattered autumn leaves in the foreground. A plate is devoted to the California quail, which is quite different from the bob-white. Grapes and wheat are introduced into the design with good effect. The ruffed grouse is picturesquely treated with fern fronds and wintergreen berries. The ptarmigan, the subject of another plate, is enjoying a bath. Overhanging him is a budding sprig of a pine tree.

The woodcock plate shows two young birds on the border of a marsh. One is trying vainly to capture a may-fly that is just beyond its reach, and the other is dozing in the sunshine. A feature of this picture is



FRUIT-PLATE. "HUCKLEBERRY."

live-oak, draped with Spanish moss, supplies the motive for another. The beautiful Ohio golden-rod is used in the decoration of one of the plates, in "compliment to the wife of President Hayes," and it would be very



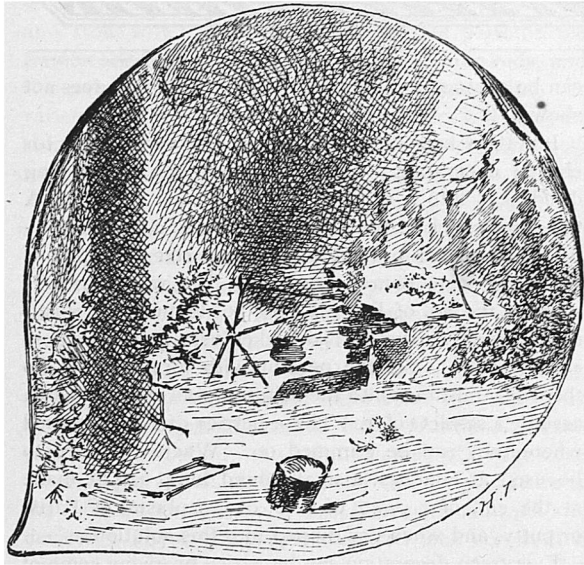
FRUIT-PLATE. "PAPAW."

diminutive atelier, from May to October, the original designs for the President's set were made. The studio proper was composed of three small dressing-rooms thrown into one; but the collection of birds, animals, fish, plants, and other objects, from which the artist made his drawings, grew gradually to such proportions that he required no less than six of the adjoining dressing-rooms. In one, suspended by numerous cords, hung a great fish-hawk (for the possession of which he was liable to a fine of twenty-five dollars). A raccoon occupied a separate apartment. In a tank of water, in another dressing-room, swam fish of various kinds, which fishermen frequently brought. A green turtle enjoyed a bed of seaweed in the same apartment. Fish were here that had been sent from the Gulf of Mexico. Objects in the collection were from States many hundred miles distant.

We have now noticed every design in the White House service excepting the independent butter-plate, the coffee-cup, and the tea-cup. In these, one design in each case does office for the set. The butter-plate, an illustration of which is given in the margin at the beginning of this article, is a close copy of the leaf of the water-lily. The surface is of a tender green color; the stem is arranged as a base. Drops of water

are represented on the leaf. The coffee-cup is strikingly Japanese in character. The form is derived from a joint of the bamboo stalk. The decoration is simple and at the same time very

clever, it being chiefly derived from the object itself. A sprout which springs from the eye of a joint in the bamboo cup serves in the most natural manner for the handle, and the twig of bamboo happily set in the saucer holds the cup in position. The ground-color



FRUIT-PLATE. "MAPLE SUGAR."

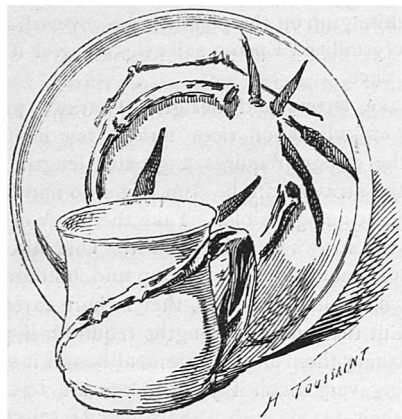
throughout is that of the bamboo, which combines harmoniously with rich gilding generously but not too lavishly applied.

The tea cup is somewhat eccentric in shape. It is made to resemble a mandarin's hat (inverted), the handle being formed by the stem of a tea-plant, the leaves of which are used as decoration on the exterior of the cup. The interior is tinted a delicate green, the saucer and outside of the cup being further enriched with dead gold. All the colors are applied under the glaze. The saucer of the tea-cup is provided with a device similar to that of the coffee-cup.

CHINA AS BRIC-A-BRAC.

THE following interesting remarks on china for decorative purposes are by W. J. Loftie :

"For decorative purposes, 'Oriental,' that is Chinese and Japanese, china, only, is worth much. Some Sèvres, and a good deal of what the modern English makers have produced of late years, is also to be admired, but chiefly in so far as it approaches the 'Oriental.' As to the porcelain, for which, under the names of Chelsea, Bow, and Bristol, such fabulous prices are often given, I have little or nothing to say. They are ugly, inharmonious, sometimes dingy, sometimes gaudy, and only valuable as very fragile curiosities. I cannot remember ever to have seen a beautiful example of any of these much-prized potteries. Of Worcester and Derby, on the other hand, some very beautiful specimens occasionally occur, close imitations of the Oriental patterns. It is sometimes quite absurd to see a plate or a bowl of Oriental ware put up and sold for a few shillings, while a similar piece, imitated from it and



COFFEE-CUP AND SAUCER.

not nearly so good, but bearing a Worcester mark, fetches as many pounds.

"The mark, indeed, generally determines the value of the china. So far we have only deciphered and identified a few of the Chinese and Japanese marks, and cannot always tell what is valuable or scarce. But on

European marks many great volumes have been written, and there is no need I should go into them here. If you buy with a view to making your house look pretty, you will avoid the European and cleave to the Oriental, and a few years hence the labors of investigators may have determined the comparative rarity and value of the pieces in your collection. As an example of the difference in value at present between European and foreign work, I may mention the case of an eminent Parisian manufacturer who produced at a price of forty guineas each a pair of jars such as could be imported from China and sold here for forty shillings.

"I do not think plates look well hung on the wall. They should be put on shelves in a kind of dresser. Such a piece of furniture looks very suitable in a dining-room, and may be made convenient as well as pretty. China in the dining-room may consist of plates and dishes, ranged neatly on the sideboard, but china in the drawing-room should only consist of purely ornamental objects and of tea-things.

"I have seen brown ware and Flemish-gray pottery used with good effect in a library or on a staircase. Such pottery is very strong, and the housemaid will seldom succeed in breaking it when she is dusting."

HINTS FOR UNDERGLAZE WORK.

MISS McLAUGHLIN, in her recent manual of underglaze painting with clay colors, remarks, that the process of glazing over such colors has a tendency to soften and melt the tints into each other, but this effect must be enhanced by judicious use of the middle tints and shadows of the painting, and by leaving the edges thin. One of the greatest beauties of this kind of



FRUIT-PLATE. "PECAN-NUT."

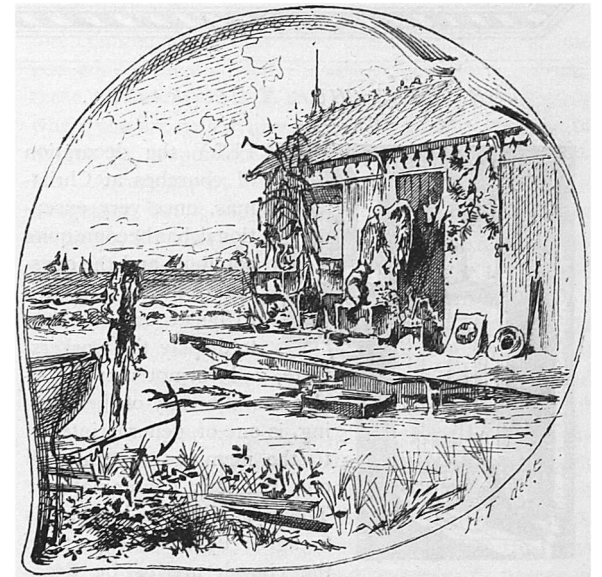
painting when well done, is the effect of the rich colors melting into each other with a charming indistinctness, which leaves something to the imagination of the beholder. Miss McLaughlin further says :

"Those who have not been accustomed to the use of color in such masses will perhaps be embarrassed at first by the difficulty of painting with clay. This will soon be overcome by practice, it being taken for granted that any one desiring to practice this kind of painting should have already acquired a knowledge of the rules which govern art. With regard to the colors to be used it is enough to say that a sufficient number can be obtained to produce by admixture in various degrees tints for the production of any subject required. It is only necessary to remember that in these mixtures the stronger colors must not be in such proportion as to overpower the weaker.

"Underglaze decorations can be as varied in regard to subjects as paintings on canvas. Floral decorations seem to be the best adapted to vases or other objects having rounded surfaces. Plaques and vases such as pilgrim jars, which afford flat surfaces, may also be decorated with landscapes or figures. Decorations of a similar character can be produced upon ware of different colors, leaving the color of the clay for a ground. Monochrome decorations can also be produced, by the use of natural clays of various colors, in the same manner as that pursued in the use of the artificially-tinted clay."

Concerning the drying and firing of pottery decorated with clay colors, Miss McLaughlin says :

"When the painting has been completed it should dry very slowly, and it would be better if possible to effect this by placing it in a moist, cool place. It is,

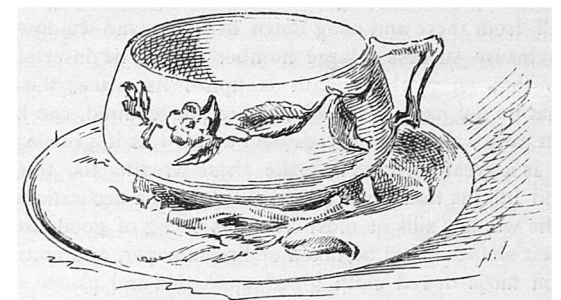


FRUIT-PLATE. "STUDIO."

however, difficult to handle a piece of ware when wet. The clay is in a very soft state, and a sudden jar might cause the vase to fall to pieces. If the vase has not been in proper condition for painting, or has dried too quickly, it will, after some hours have elapsed, begin to show fine cracks upon the surface of the painting. These may be stopped, before they have gone too far, by passing a modelling tool over them, or, if the crack has become too deep for this treatment, it may be filled with clay as nearly as possible in the state at which the body of the ware has arrived. If the cracks are allowed to go too far, it will be difficult to stop them, as they may have extended into the body of the ware. If the piece is permitted to go to the firing with any cracks, however small, upon its surface, they will become widened in the firing and, especially after the glazing, will show very distinctly. In the biscuit they may be stopped by filling them with powdered clay mixed with gum water. But an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and the safest method is to prevent their appearance in the first place. If this cannot be done, they must be stopped as soon as they appear. The finer clays seem to have a greater tendency to crack in drying, and when the cracks have appeared they are more difficult to stop than in other clays.

"When the piece decorated is thoroughly dry, it should be fired at a temperature sufficient to make the body durable, and at the same time to perfectly fix the colors of the painting, so that there may be no danger that the glaze will cause them to run in the final firing. The temperature at which the work is to be fired must, of course, depend upon the qualities of the clay of which the piece of ware is made. It may be said that the temperature at which Rockingham ware is fired is suitable for this work, and that a glaze such as that used upon that kind of ware can be used with good results."

Miss McLaughlin's book contains some valuable chap-



TEA-CUP AND SAUCER.

ters devoted to modelling in relief, incising and carving in clay, and painting upon the biscuit with underglaze colors in the form of thin washes resembling water-color painting. No one interested in pottery decoration, whether as an amateur or professionally, can afford to be without this little manual.